

[23 February, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

State of Children

276. SHRI SODPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY.

SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether UNICEF, in its latest edition of "The State of the World Children, 2001", has painted a rather dismal picture of India stating that as many as 58 per cent of Indian children are malnourished and one out of every three babies is born under weight; that Infant mortality rate is 70 per thousand and the girl mortality is static at one and half time that of the boy child; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to improve this position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) As per the UNICEF's latest edition "The State of the World's Children Report 2001". 53% of under five children are underweight (moderate and severe) and 33% of the infants are with low birth weight in India. More recent information from the National Family Health Survey II, conducted in 1998-99, indicated that the per cent of children who are underweight had dropped to 47%.

(b) Various measures adopted by the Government to improve the nutritional status of the population are:-

- (i) Nutrition education to increase the awareness and bringing about the desired changes in the feeding practices including promotion of breast-feeding;
- (ii) Supplementary feeding programmes viz. (1) Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme; (2) Special Nutrition Programme (SNP), (3) Balwadi Nutrition Programme (BNP) Wheat Based Supplementary Nutrition Programme; Mid-Day Meal Programme; (6) Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojna etc. Besides these, Programmes for

prevention of specific nutrient deficiency disorders such as National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme; Prophylaxis Programme to prevent blindness due to Vitamin A deficiency and nutritional Anaemia due to Iron deficiency are a part of the Reproductive and Child Health Programme. Pilot project for control of micronutrient malnutrition is also under implementation.

- (iii) Increased agricultural production;
- (iv) Improving the purchasing power of the people through income-generating schemes;
- (v) Availability of essential food items at subsidised cost through Public Distribution System.

Medical teams of foreign countries for Gujarat

277. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that many foreign countries rushed medical teams for the service of earthquake victims in Gujarat;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that many teams had to wait for many days in the absence of guidance and co-ordinator from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for their deployment; and
- (d) the steps taken for optimum utilization of their services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A.RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the information available till date Medical teams from Germany (36 members), France (60 members), Hungary (15 members), Israel (160 members), Korea (23 members), Japan (9 members), Malaysia (7 members), Oman (14 members), Austria (19 members), South Korea (6 members), Mexico (12 members), reached Gujarat for providing medical relief to the earthquake victims.

- (c) No, Sir.